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STATE FOR SCA/A AND PM/RSAT

E.O. 12958 N/A
TAGS: PREL MASS MARR AF
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: POST ASSESSMENT ON THE RELEASE OF NIGHT VISION DEVICES

¶1. (U) This is an action request - see paragraph 2.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: Post requests the immediate release of Night Vision Devices (NVDs), specifically 1,750 pairs of the American Technologies Network Corporation ATN NVG7-CGTI Individual Night Vision Device-Night Vision Goggles, to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA). The Generation 2 system will be used by the Afghan National Army (ANA) Commando Battalions to advance nighttime operational effectiveness while reducing collateral damage risk. Two commando battalions are teamed with Coalition Forces in combat operations at this time, with additional units in training. USG funding for this equipment is estimated at \$2.3M through a Title 22 funded Foreign Military Sales case. END SUMMARY.

Justification of NVD Technology for Release

¶3. (SBU) ATN NVG7-CGTI Individual NVDs will provide high quality image clarity for nighttime operations. They allow the wearer to select and clearly identify the enemy and reduce the possibility of collateral damage.

Justification of GIRoA Need and U.S. Interests

¶4. (SBU) The ANA Commando Battalions need a viable night vision capability that will allow them to safely and effectively support ANA and Coalition Force night operations - particularly in conjunction with Coalition Special Operations Forces. Release of the NVDs will enhance the ANA Commandos' ability to conduct counter-terrorism missions, improve interoperability with Coalition Forces, and improve their ability to maintain their own defense and security.

Afghanistan Safeguarding Sensitive Technology

¶5. (SBU) Afghanistan has demonstrated the intent and ability to protect sensitive, classified military technology since working with U.S. and Coalition Forces. The Embassy has confirmed with the Afghan government, in writing, their intent to provide these items with the same degree of security as the U.S. would provide. We will continue to mentor the GIRoA on their protection of sensitive USG technology in anticipation of long-term cooperation between our governments. We also will obtain all necessary formal agreements with the GIRoA before transferring any sensitive equipment or technology.

Anticipated Reaction from Neighboring Nations

¶6. (SBU) We do not anticipate the release of these NVDs to the GIRoA will adversely affect the regional balance of power or cause negative reactions from neighboring nations.

Afghanistan's Political Importance to the Region

¶7. (SBU) A stable, democratically-elected Afghan government, capable of protecting its people and sovereignty, and remaining at peace with its neighbors is one of the USG's highest priorities. The release and employment of ATN NVG7-CGTI NVDs will facilitate progress toward this goal, advancing the ANA Commando Battalions' ability to identify, target and carry out night operations against anti-Afghan, anti-ISAF, and anti-OEF forces while reducing the risk to self and others.

Source of Financing and Economic Impact

¶8. (SBU) This purchase will be financed by the USG using Foreign Military Sales Funding. The cost is estimated at \$2.3 million for 1,750 pairs of goggles. There is no significant economic impact anticipated to be generated by this sale.

Relevant Human Rights Considerations

¶9. (SBU) There are no human rights considerations that should preclude the release of the defense equipment to the GIRoA.

Training

¶10. (SBU) Training would be provided by U.S. personnel already in country and not necessitate additional U.S. presence.

Post Recommendation

¶11. (SBU) Post recommends immediate Washington approval for the release of the ATN NVG7-CGTI NVDs to the GIRoA.

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